

ULSTER COUNTY PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

SUPPLIER HANDBOOK



Robin L. Peruso, CPPB
Purchasing Agent

1. PURCHASING POLICY

The Purchasing Department is responsible for the purchase of all materials, and for the execution of all contracts for services, capital projects and supplies for the Ulster County Departments and their facilities. Purchasing's objective is to obtain the best quality products and services for the best price, in a fair, open, and competitive manner.

Purchasing is responsible for initiating and maintaining effective and professional relationships between vendors and the various County Department employees, and to serve as the exclusive channel through which all requests for County purchases and price quotations are handled.

The County of Ulster will not be responsible for purchases made without prior authorization from the Purchasing Department. Goods should not be shipped and services should not be performed without first obtaining a purchase order or a fully executed contract. All contracts are reviewed and processed through the Ulster County Attorney's Office, Division of Contract Management.

Purchasing's operations are governed by New York State Municipal Law § 103, Local Law No. 4 of 1978, Article No. 16 of the Ulster County Law, and Ulster County's Legislative Resolution No. 544 dated November 9, 1978, Ulster County Legislature.

Office hours are 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Suppliers are requested to make appointments for office visits at (845) 340-3400.

2. THE PURCHASING PROCESS (How to do business with the County)

Ulster County along with Dutchess County, Rockland County, the City of New Rochelle, and the Town of Cortlandt have joined forces in creating the Hudson Valley Municipal Purchasing Group ("HVMPG") to establish a **Regional Bid Notification Service and E-procurement System** to alert and notify businesses within the Hudson Valley of municipal contracting opportunities. Participation in the Regional Bid Notification Service is open to all municipalities, school districts and other government agencies within the Hudson Valley.

Municipal organizations in the following counties are eligible to become members of the H.V.M.P.G.: Rockland County, Orange County, Sullivan County, Ulster County, Westchester County, Putnam County and Dutchess County.

Businesses and suppliers will now only have to visit a single web site to search for and download municipal bidding opportunities within the Hudson Valley. The system provides instant online access to bids, RFP's, quotes and amendments.

To register with Ulster County, log on to: www.co.ulster.ny.us/purchasing, have your Federal ID# or SSN ready. Call 1-800-677-1997, ext. 214 for help while registering.

3. NOTICE TO BIDDERS

All bids must be advertised as legal notices in our official designated newspapers. Newspapers for 2007 are the Woodstock Times and the Saugerties Post Star. All legal notices are placed on Thursday.

4. BID VIEWING

All vendors are encouraged to attend the bid openings, all of which are open to the public. At this time vendors may view the bids that were opened.

5. MINORITY OWNED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE POLICY

The County of Ulster is committed to the principles of equal opportunity and affirmative action. As an equal opportunity employer, the County of Ulster encourages small and minority owned businesses to bid on County contracts.

6. FUNDING SOURCES

All prospective suppliers should be aware of Ulster County's multiple funding sources and the requirements thereof. Depending on whether a particular project is funded through grants from NYS, the Federal Government or others, there may be unique and particular requirements to bidding. These particular requirements are listed in the bid specifications and it is the responsibility of the vendor to understand and adhere to such particulars.

7. DELIVERY OF GOODS

Deliveries are to be completed during hours specified by the receiving department. The delivery person **must provide a delivery ticket or packing list at the time of delivery.** It is recommended that the delivery person get the date and a legible signature from the person receiving the goods at the time of delivery as documentation for the vendor's records. A copy of such signed delivery ticket should be available upon request.

8. PICK-UPS FROM COUNTY EMPLOYEES

When vendors have open charge accounts for the County, and Ulster County employees pick-up items at the vendor's business locations, vendors must request from the ordering department, an authorized list of employees names. Authorized employees only can sign for and pick up goods for the County.

9. BILLING AND PAYMENT

The following procedures are recommended for vendors in order to help ensure prompt payment:

Invoices should not be prepared and submitted until goods have been delivered and/or services have been performed unless there is a specific provision for such prepayment in a contract. Invoices, delivery papers and other related documentation must be **sent to the "Bill to" address on the Purchase Order.** The invoice must be an **original**; that is no photocopies, faxes or emails. Each invoice must provide appropriate detail, including purchase order number (if any) and order date, quantities ordered and delivered, and unit and total prices. Invoices or appropriate paperwork will be processed for payment upon receipt or acceptance of goods/services, whichever occurs later.

If there is no purchase order, the invoice and related paperwork should be sent to the ordering department. If the invoice is related to a contract, the billing detail and documentation should demonstrate compliance with the contract and the contract number should appear on the invoice.

If the vendor cannot generate invoices documenting its claim for payment, County forms may be used with the original signature of an authorized official of the vendor supplying the goods and/or services in the "Claimant's Certification" area of either the Purchase Order or Request for

Payment forms. Consult the ordering department for direction on the appropriate form to be used.

The County uses standardized contracts as a starting point for all vendor agreements. These standardized contracts are then modified to reflect (i) the actual goods and/or services to be provided and (ii) the payment terms agreed to by the County and the vendor. Copies of the standardized agreements are available for review at any time. Vendor's may request a copy of the appropriate standardized agreement by calling the County's Contract Manager at (845) 340-3441.

The foregoing are general guidelines. The ordering department that the goods and/or services are provided to should be contacted regarding any department specific requirement. All payment claims against the County are subject to audit prior to payment.

10. SALES , USE, AND OCCUPANCY TAX EXEMPTION

Ulster County is exempt from paying all Sales and Occupancy Tax imposed by the State pursuant to NYS Tax Law 1116(A) (1) as stated on each purchase order issued. Upon request, a letter attesting to this fact will be executed and signed by either the County Treasurer or Purchasing Agent.

11. SALE OF SURPLUS AND OBSOLETE MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

County policy makes the Purchasing Department responsible for classifying and choosing the proper method of disposal of surplus and obsolete material and equipment. Notices of sales will be advertised in our legal notices newspapers when appropriate.

12. CODE OF CONDUCT

Before engaging in the County procurement process, vendors must be willing to (i) assure the County that they can perform fully, timely and honestly in accordance with the terms of their contracts and (ii) demonstrate their responsibility through a history of successful and honest performance. In order to conduct business with the County, a vendor must:

- Be prepared to publicly and truthfully disclose his/her/its management and ownership, officers and owners, and current financial condition. It is expected that any of vendor's legal, financial or performance problems will be explained to the satisfaction of the County.
- Pay Prevailing wages, where legally required.
- Not "cooperate" or share pricing information with competitors. "collusive bidding", "price fixing" and "bid-rigging" are illegal.
- Not offer a "gift" of any kind to a public servant to directly or indirectly influence the drafting of procurement requirements, evaluations, awards or payment. "Bribery" is illegal.
- Not attempt to obtain a competitive advantage by requesting or receiving more information about a proposal or contract, that that which is available to all other bidders or proposers.

13. IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

BID – The offer of a bidder to provide specific goods and/or services in accordance with all specifications, terms and conditions indicated in the solicitation.

BRAND NAME OR EQUAL – A reference used to convey the general style, type, character and/or quality of the goods desired.

RFB – REQUEST FOR BID – A document used to solicit competitive sealed bids from prospective suppliers for specific goods and/or services. Resulting bids are final and non-negotiable.

RFP – REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL – A document used to solicit competitive proposals from prospective offerors to accomplish a specified scope of work. Negotiations are conducted after evaluation of offers.

RFQ – REQUEST FOR QUOTATION – A document used to solicit offers from suppliers for items or services under the statutory bid limits.

RFI – REQUEST FOR INFORMATION – A document used to identify potential suppliers for future RFP or RFB, or to confirm a Sole Source determination.

IN SUMMARY

Doing business with a County Government can be complicated, but basic rules and procedures are necessary to protect the taxpayer. This handbook is an attempt to ensure that the experience of doing business with County of Ulster is a positive experience.

No single publication can answer all questions in even the most simple business transaction. For more information, please contact:

Robin Peruso, CPPB
Purchasing Agent (845) 340-3400